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C O N F I D E N T I A L VATICAN 000298

SIPDIS

HAVANA FOR NIGRO, EUR/WE FOR MENNUTI,

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/19/2012

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SUBJECT: VATICAN REPORTS EYES ON GUANTANAMO

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR R. JAMES NICHOLSO...

SUBJECT: VATICAN REPORTS EYES ON GUANTANAMO

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR R. JAMES NICHOLSON REASONS 1.5 (B,D)

11. (C) THE VATICAN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN DESK OFFICER ADVISED POLOFF 1/16 THAT U.S. TREATMENT OF DETAINEES AT THE GUANTANAMO BASE AND ELSEWHERE IS  
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THE VATICAN DESK OFFICER, SPOKE REPEATEDLY OF CONVERSATIONS WITH A RUSSIAN DIPLOMAT AND REPUTED INTELLIGENCE ELEMENT, DMITRY SHTODIN. MSGR. MC  
FEDERATION IS CAREFULLY STUDYING U.S. TREATMENT OF DETAINEES IN SEARCH OF USEFUL PRECEDENTS TO JUSTIFY ITS TREATMENT OF CHECHNYA PRISONERS.

12. (C) MONTEMAYOR STATED THE ISSUE OF DETAINEE TREATMENT COULD ALSO GAIN PROMINENCE WITHIN THE VATICAN, WHERE A HEATED INTERNAL DEBATE ENDED  
EARLIER COMMENTS TO POLOFF THAT CERTAIN VATICAN VOICES, FEARING A HUMANITARIAN DISASTER IN THE MAKING, HAD LOBBIED FOR A VATICAN STANCE LESS AN  
THE GUANTANAMO DETAINEES MAY PROVE THE NEXT HURDLE FOR THE CURRENT CONSENSUS OF SUPPORT WITHIN THE VATICAN. (NOTE: MONTEMAYOR WAS PROBABLY REFERRING TO  
THE VATICAN STANCE ON THE GUANTANAMO DETAINEES)

13. (C) COMMENT: THE SON OF A SENIOR ARGENTINIAN NAVAL  
OFFICER, MONTEMAYOR HAS SAID IN THE PAST THAT HE AND HIS FAMILY LIVED UNDER THREAT AND WITH A PROTECTIVE POLICE DETAIL. HIS ARGENTINE BACKGROUND  
QUOTE LACK OF TENDER FEELINGS END QUOTE TOWARD THE GUANTANAMO DETAINEES. AS AN ARGENTINE, MONTEMAYOR FINDS THE U.S. TO BE  
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IN FAMILIAR WATERS, LEGALLY AND ETHICALLY, IN ITS EVOLVING APPROACH TO THE GUANTANAMO DETAINEES AS WELL AS THE JOHN WALKER CASE. WOULD ARGENTINE  
NICHOLSON

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